LIBRARY OF HEAVEN'S PATH

C1264 - In the Ring (1)

Chapter 1264: In the Ring (1)

Translator: StarveCleric **Editor:** Millman97

"It's Qian Xu's Three Arts of Assassination!"

"There should at least a hundred people who die from those three moves of his every year…"

"That can't be helped. His daggers are fast and vicious, making them extremely hard to guard against. Opponents of the same cultivation realm barely stand a chance against him!"

“That newcomer is a goner!”

…

The crowd remarked calmly as they watched the two daggers whizzing for Zhang Xuan.

While it was true that Qian Xu’s strength was nothing compared to the Conqueror of Hundred, Hong Yang, he was still a famous figure in the underground black market.

He was renowned for the seemingly endless daggers he had on him, as well as his vicious Three Arts of Assassination. With just his superior mastery over those two things, he had been able to claim countless lives over the years.

Yet, that arrogant newcomer dared to provoke him head-on, inciting Qian Xu to use his strongest moves. With this, the guillotine had already been raised upon that newcomer’s head.

With such thoughts in mind, the eyes of the crowd swiftly turned to the newcomer. Even as the two daggers were swiftly approaching him, the newcomer did not turn around at all, as if he was unaware of the threat right behind him.

Watching the sight, the scar-faced young man immediately spoke up anxiously, wanting to remind the newcomer. However, before he could say a word, the vision before him suddenly blurred.

He could not say for sure what exactly happened—it might have just been a figment of his imagination—but it seemed like the newcomer’s foot had shot up to strike the daggers.

Wu!

In the next instant, the daggers abruptly turned around and flew back at a speed much faster from before.

Pu he!

“What?” Astonished, before Qian Xu could even react, the daggers had already plunged into his wrists.

Hu!

The sheer momentum of the daggers sent Qian Xu flying all the way back until his wrists were firmly pinned onto the wall by the daggers, forming a cross. Qian Xu struggled with all his might, but he found that the daggers were simply too firmly lodged into the wall, such that he could not free himself.

“What in the world…”

“With just a slight kick, not only did he neutralize Qian Xu’s daggers, he even returned it to Qian Xu and pinned him against the wall? Just how powerful can that newcomer be?”

“That newcomer is really no ordinary figure? Will the black market find itself another Conqueror of Ten soon?”

“It’s still too early to say, but with just that hand, that newcomer should have no trouble winning seven to eight matches!”

…

Watching as Qian Xu howled in agony on the wall, the crowd felt their hair standing on end.

Although that brief encounter was not sufficient for them to analyze how powerful the newcomer was, the fact that he was able to subdue Qian Xu so easily was more than enough to say that he was not an opponent to be underestimated.

Perhaps, he could very well be crowned the next Conqueror of Ten.

“Interesting.”

By the corner, Hong Yang took a glance at the departing back of the newcomer before closing his eyes once more.

The counterattack that the newcomer had launched earlier might have seemed impressive, but to him, it was truly nothing at all.

Even if he could not subdue Qian Xu with a single punch, all he would have to do was smash another one in.

…

The ring was not too big, and its perimeter had been secured by a unique formation, forming something similar to a cage. Once a challenger entered the ring, he would not be

able to escape until the end of the battle.

“Sign this Life-and-Death Contract first.”

Before Zhang Xuan could step into the ring, a member of the Ring of Death’s staff standing in front of the ring passed a parchment over to him.

Zhang Xuan lowered his head to swiftly browse through the contract before sealing it with a droplet of his blood. Following which, as if some kind of seal around him had been released, he heard thunderous cheers from the surrounding crowd.

Raising his head, he saw that the spectator stand was fully filled with roughly five to six hundred people. There were people from all walks of life, be it male or female, old or young. Every single one of them had eyes that were crimson from the irrepressible excitement within them.

It seems like the thrill of watching a life-and-death battle really does appeal to many. Above that, from spectating this kind of duel, they can also gain some insights into battle as well, Zhang Xuan thought.

In life-and-death battles, cultivators would be pushed to their very limits, forcing them to show their strongest hands for survival. Such intense battles could be beneficial in providing inspiration to other cultivators as to how they could further refine their fighting prowess.

Perhaps, this might even have been the biggest reason the black market was able to grow to such a massive scale.

By the time Zhang Xuan stepped onto the stage, a young man was already standing on the opposite side with his hands wrapped around his chest. Nonchalance and loftiness could be seen in his eyes, as if this battle was nothing more than a show for him.

The young man seemed to be the opponent for this round, Meng Fuxing.

“Alright, let’s not waste our time dawdling over here and end it quickly.” Taking a rough calculation of the current time, Zhang Xuan noted that he did not have much time before

the auction started. Unwilling to waste even a second, he stretched his back lazily before clasping his fist. “Pardon me.”

Hu!

In the blink of an eye, Zhang Xuan’s figure suddenly materialized right before the young man, and his arm darted forward to strike the latter.

The strength behind this move was not too strong, but the young man felt as if a massive net was closing in on him, preventing him from escaping at all.

Not expecting Zhang Xuan to make a move against him so abruptly, the young man widened his eyes in shock. “You… I am not…”

He immediately attempted to sidestep to dodge the attack, but to his horror, he found himself unable to move properly, as if he was standing in marshland.

Pah!

Zhang Xuan’s palm connected with the young man’s face, and a crisp echo resounded throughout the ring. Before the young man could speak, he had already collapsed on the

ground, knocked out.

He had thought it through prior to entering the ring. Since he could not intentionally let him opponent off, he would just have to knock the other party out.

A knock out could also be considered incapacitated, so naturally, the match would have to be judged as his victory.

After knocking out the young man, Zhang Xuan waited for a long moment, but no one declared the results of the duel. Perplexed, he placed his hands behind his back and asked, “I should have won for the first match, right?”

Still silence.

Confused, Zhang Xuan took a look at his surroundings. To his bewilderment, the crowd from before had fallen completely silent, and their excited expressions had been replaced with flabbergasted ones instead.

Zhang Jiuxiao was also amid the crowd, and his palm was slapped onto his face. He kept trying to shout something, but due to the various impeding formations between them, Zhang Xuan was unable to hear a word at all.

“What’s wrong?” Seeing that the crowd was reacting in a manner contrary to what he had expected, Zhang Xuan was bewildered. Just as he was about to speak, the formation to the ring suddenly opened up, and another young man walked in. Upon seeing the fainted person on the ground, he widened his eyes in astonishment.

“Are you my second opponent?”

In order to become the Conqueror of Ten, one had to defeat ten opponents consecutively. In Zhang Xuan’s view, the young man who had just entered was likely his second opponent.

“I am Meng Fuxing!”

“You are Meng Fuxing? Then, this guy is…” Hearing those words, Zhang Xuan widened his eyes in shock.

If the young man before him was the opponent he was supposed to fight against, who was the person he had just knocked out?

“The referee!” Meng Fuxing’s lips twitched.

“There’s actually a referee for the ring?” Zhang Xuan’s eyelids twitched.

“Have you ever seen an official duel without a referee?” Meng Fuxing retorted.

“…” Zhang Xuan was rendered speechless.

What the heck!

Typically speaking, referees should be standing beneath the ring and not in it. As a result, when Zhang Xuan saw the other ‘Meng Fuxing’ standing on the stage—the fact that the other party had a fierce-looking face did little to help as well—he had thought that the other party was his opponent!

To knock out the referee before even meeting his opponent, this was really…

Finally understanding what Zhang Jiuxiao was screaming outside, Zhang Xuan sheepishly asked, “Will I be… disqualified?”

He had thought that he was being smart by claiming the first move, but his ‘smart move’ only ended up knocking out the referee. It would really be terrible if his right to fight in the Ring of Death was revoked as a result of this!

Recovering from his initial astonishment, Meng Fuxing replied indifferently, “Unlikely. There aren’t any rules here. Let’s not waste time and begin.”

In the first place, the black market was intended to be a lawless land. In other rings, knocking out the referee would have been a huge penalty, but in the Ring of Death, it was not that big a deal.

Hula!

Meng Fuxing charged straight toward Zhang Xuan.

While he was in the midst of his movements, his hands were already moving swiftly, creating afterimages reminiscent of a blooming lotus.

Saint intermediate-tier battle technique, Thousand Buddha Lotus Hands!

There was no doubt that Meng Fuxing possessed noteworthy strength. Even if he was still slightly lacking compared to the previous Qian Xu, there were few cultivators of the same cultivation realm who would be a match for him. As soon as he made his move, he had already made sure to seal the surrounding space with his zhenqi, forcing Zhang Xuan to meet him head-on.

“Not too bad,” Zhang Xuan remarked as he raised his palm to meet the other party’s assault.

Huala!

It was the exact same move he had used against the referee earlier. It carried an imposing momentum that seemed as if it would not rest until it smacked every last drop of brainy remains out of one’s ears.

This strike was not a battle technique or any profound move, just the simplest slap.

But for some reason, it seemed like harness some mysterious might that left those facing it feeling as if they would be unable to avoid it.

Pah!

The two palms collided, and Meng Fuxing's face swiftly flushed pale. He retreated several steps back before his legs caved in, causing him to fall to the ground. The next moment, his eyes suddenly rolled up. He had fainted.

"Strong!"

"What move is that?"

"I reckon that's some kind of palm art. But still, to be able to knock Meng Fuxing out in a single strike, that fellow there should at least be able to achieve five consecutive victories!"

"That's not necessarily so. The stronger a move is, the more it depletes one's zhenqi. The ring isn't just about absolute fighting prowess but endurance as well. If he tires himself too much in the earlier rounds, he will risk running out of juice quickly."

…

Such discussions broke out in the spectator stand.

Even though Zhang Xuan had been a little reckless, knocking out the referee as soon as he got onto the stage, there was no denying that he did possess true strength.

However, in the Ring of Death, strength was not enough for one to get far. Stamina was of the utmost importance as well.

Many challengers would step into the Ring of Death to acquire the title of Conqueror of Ten each year, but those who had succeeded were truly numbered.

“I am Tan Shiyou. Are you my opponent?”

After knocking out Meng Fuxing, it did not take long before another young man came onto the stage.

This young man going by the name of Tan Shiyou was slightly stronger than Meng Fuxing, but he was still far from a match for Zhang Xuan. A single blow to the face, and he was floored as well.

The same went for the next three opponents as well. A hint of exhaustion was starting to show through Zhang Xuan’s posture. Sweat was dripping down his forehead, and his hands were beginning to tremble non-stop as well.

Right after he defeated the fifth person, Zhang Xuan heard a loud voice. “You have just cleared the fifth round. Do you want to carry on?”

A casual challenger would usually stop at the fifth match as the matches beyond would have stakes involved. As an inevitable result of that, the later matches would be much more demanding than before, and until one side was crippled or incapacitated, the match would not stop.

“I’ll continue,” Zhang Xuan replied.

His main goal at the Ring of Death was to obtain as many concentrated high-tier spirit stones as possible, but what he had earned so far could only be considered peanuts. Naturally, how could he back down, especially since the true money lay ahead of him!

“Very well. Your opponent for your sixth match is Kui Qing. Just like you, he also has five victories under his belt as of the moment,” the voice informed Zhang Xuan.

As the first five matches did not involve any wagers, the pairings would be mainly between newcomers. It was from the sixth match on that the true veterans started appearing.

The pairings would be made in a manner that placed opponents with an equal number of consecutive victories against one another—those with six victories would be faced against those with six victories, those with seven victories would be faced against those with seven victories, and so on.

As a result of this system, Zhang Xuan’s next opponent was someone who had achieved five consecutive victories as well.

Hu!

A young man slowly walked up the ring under Zhang Xuan’s gaze.

Different from the previous opponents he had faced, this young man exuded a faint killing aura, signifying that he was a dangerous figure.

“I have watched your matches. So far, you have subdued all your opponents with a single strike. Not too bad at all,” Kui Qing said with a hair-raising smile as his sharp eyes

assessed Zhang Xuan from head to toe keenly. “However, that strike of yours should consume quite of bit of your zhenqi, right? I sure would like to see how many more times you can use it!”

Hula!

With a flick of his wrist, a spear appeared in Kui Qing’s hands, and without any warning whatsoever, he drove it swiftly toward Zhang Xuan.

That cunning old rat! He actually launched an assault on me while he was talking…

It took only an instant before the spear was already right before Zhang Xuan.

“You want to play spearmanship with me?” A glint flashed across Zhang Xuan’s eyes as he looked unblinkingly at the spear whizzing toward him.

“You should know that I’m the true ancestor of spearmanship!”

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